

Message Text

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71-60

ACTION EB-07

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R 261425Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3886

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 0849

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ETRD EAIR SF US

SUBJ: SAFAIR REQUEST TO FLY TO RHODESIA

1. MR. ANTON LOMBARD, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SAFAIR, RECENTLY TOLD EMBASSY THAT HE IS NEGOTIATING CONTRACT WITH WITSWATERSRAND NATIVE LABOR ASSOCIATION (WNLA), WHICH IS ORGANIZATION THAT CONTRACTS BLACK LABOR FOR ALL GOLD MINES IN SOUTH AFRICA, TO TRANSPORT MINE WORKERS FROM SURROUNDING COUNTRIES TO AND FROM SOUTH AFRICA. CONTRACT WITH WNLA IS PACKAGE DEAL WHICH INCLUDES RETURNING 140,000 MINE WORKERS TO MALAWI, AND BRINGING TO SOUTH AFRICA 30,000 MINE WORKERS FROM BOTSWANA, 10,000 WORKERS FROM ANGOLA (EMBOFF QUESTIONED THIS BUT LOMBARD STATED THAT IT IS DEFINITELY IN CONTRACT, ALTHOUGH HE DOES NOT SEE HOW IT WILL BE DONE), 30,000 WORKERS FROM RHODESIA AND 30,000 WORKERS FROM THE TRANSKEI AND CISKEI. PENDING CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS OVER MINE LABOR WITH MOZAMBIQUE, CONTRACT MAY ALSO INCLUDE RETURN OF 140,000 WORKERS TO MOZAMBIQUE OR AT VERY LEAST TRANSPORTING SOME AS YET UNKNOWN BUT SMALLER NUMBER OF MOZAMBIQUE WORKERS TO AND FROM MOZAMBIQUE.

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2. LOMBARD STATED THAT CONTRACT WOULD REQUIRE FOUR AIRCRAFT

FULL TIME FOR ONE YEAR AND IS VERY PROFITABLE FOR SAFAIR. HOWEVER, WNLA HAS INSISTED THAT RHODESIAN MINE WORKER CONTINGENT MUST BE PART OF OVERALL CONTRACT AND CANNOT BE SPLIT OUT. LOMBARD HAS ASKED, THEREFORE, IF DEPT OF STATE WOULD MAKE ONE-TIME EXCEPTION TO CONDITIONS OF LICENSE UNDER WHICH HE BOUGHT HIS L-100'S THAT STIPULATES NO FLIGHTS TO AND FROM RHODESIA IN ORDER TO ALLOW HIM TO FULFILL FULL CONTRACT. HE ADDED THAT PART OF PROBLEM MAY BE SOLVED SHOULD CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SAFAIR AND SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS FOR TWO OLD MODEL BOEING 707'S BE SUCCESSFUL. IF HE IS ABLE TO PURCHASE THESE TWO PLANES, HE WOULD USE THEM TO TRANSPORT MAJORITY OF RHODESIAN WORKERS SINCE THERE NO RESTRICTIONS ON THEM ABOUT FLYING TO RHODESIA. WHETHER OR NOT PURCHASE OF 707'S GOES THROUGH, HOWEVER, THERE ARE BETWEEN 8,000 AND 9,000 RHODESIAN WORKERS WHO MUST BE PICKED UP IN PART OF RHODESIA WHICH DOES NOT HAVE AIRFIELD CAPABLE OF ACCEPTING 707, BUT CAN ACCEPT L-100 EASILY. SO EVEN WITH 707'S, WHICH NOT ASSURED BY ANY MEANS, L-100'S WOULD STILL BE NEEDED.

3. AIRLIFT OF WORKERS FROM RHODESIA TO BEGIN FIRST PART OF MAY. EACH L-100 CAPABLE OF CARRYING 90 WORKERS. LOMBARD WILLING TO ACCEPT ALMOST ANY CAVEAT NECESSARY ON USE OF L-100'S, TO INCLUDE PAINTING OUT SAFAIR COLORS AND MARKINGS.

4. MR. LOMBARD ASKED EMBASSY TO PASS TO DEPT HIS REQUEST THAT ONE-TIME EXCEPTION BE MADE TO LICENSE CONDITIONS BARRING FLIGHTS TO RHODESIA. LOMBARD, WHO HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY FORTHCOMING AND COOPERATIVE WITH EMBASSY, ASSURED EMOBOFF THAT THIS IS DEFINITELY ONE-TIME REQUEST AND THAT HE HAS NO INTENTIONS OF TRYING TO USE IT AS FOOT IN THE DOOR FOR FUTURE REQUESTS TO HAUL CARGO TO RHODESIA. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON RESPONSE TO BE GIVEN LOMBARD.
EDMONDSON

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